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# PARALYMPIC SPORT IN THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Goalball



## BACKGROUND

- 'Goalball' is a three-a-side indoor court game developed for players who have vision impairments and is a Paralympic sport. However, in recreational play anyone can take part as all players wear eyeshades.

## WHAT YOU NEED

- Competition goalball is played on an 18 metres by 9 metres court (a volleyball court's dimensions).
- The standard goalball contains internal bells. But you can use an improvised sound ball (see STEP for ideas).
- Eyeshades for all players.
- Non-permanent tape and string to make tactile lines.

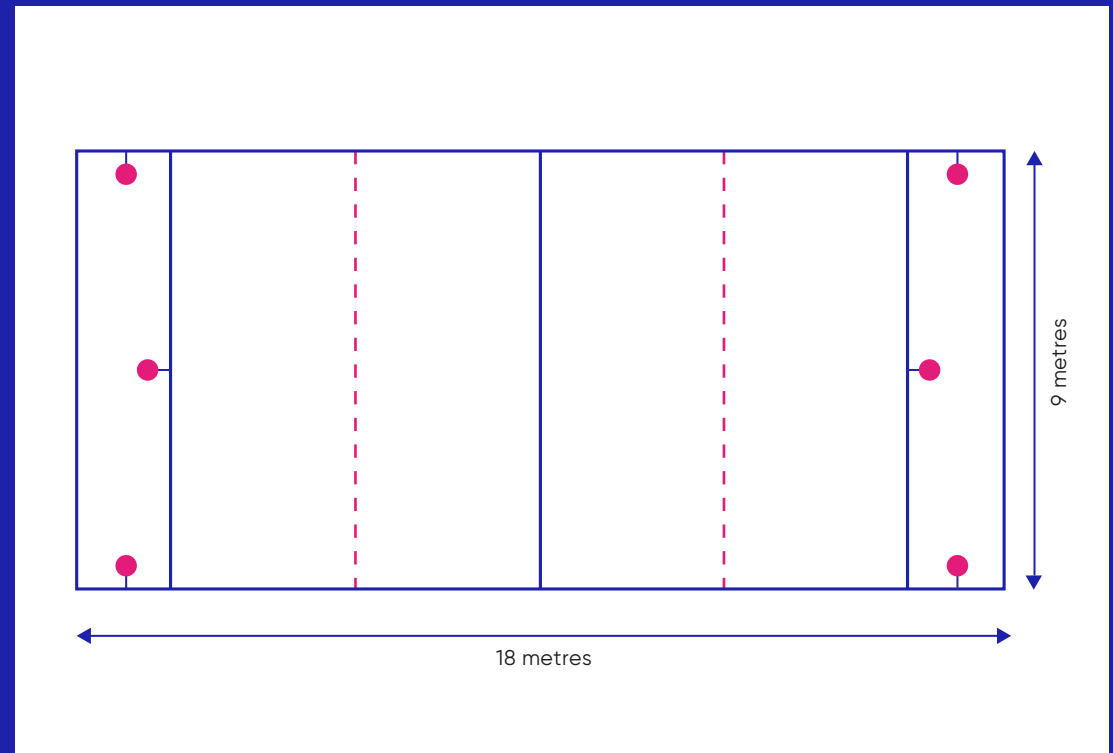
## HOW TO PLAY

### Basic rules:

- When the ball is thrown it must touch the floor before passing over the High Ball Line. This is to ensure that the ball is rolled giving the defending team an opportunity to hear it coming.
- Once a ball has been fielded, it must be thrown again within 10 seconds. With beginners, remove this time limit.
- No player can take more than 2 throws consecutively.
- If the ball goes out of play the defending team takes possession.

### Three things make goalball unique:

- the ball contains internal bells that helps players to locate it during play;
- goalball is played on a playing area with tactile markings to help players determine where they are on the court;
- all players wear eyeshades which makes it possible for everyone to play equally.



## THINK ABOUT



An essential aspect of goalball, not only in competition but also when practising; that is ... silence! It's important that everyone not involved in a game or practice remains as quiet as possible to give players the best possible chance to hear and track the ball.

Use the STEP adaptation tool to ensure that players of all abilities can participate

<b>SPACE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If playing in a smaller area, use a lightweight goalball or alternative.</li><li>• The lines on the court and the players' orientation marks must be tactile enabling players to feel them with their fingers or feet. However, in practice, only the players' orientation lines and the lines defining the team area need to be tactile.</li><li>• Players are positioned in a v-shaped formation; this prevents collisions and also creates better defence. If the front player misses the ball one of those behind might save it.</li></ul>
<b>TASK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Players should develop good communication; they can pass the goalball to each other but must play an attacking shot within 10 seconds.</li><li>• Practise rolling the ball in different ways; bowling, rolling with both hands, pushing.</li></ul>
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An official goalball is quite heavy (1.25kg); use lighter balls with beginners or younger players.</li><li>• As an alternative, wrap a basketball or football in a plastic bag; this makes a 'crackling' sound when rolled.</li><li>• Eyeshades, or alternatives, should block out all vision, but for practice improvised eyeshades can be used.</li></ul>
<b>PEOPLE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beginners can play without eyeshades initially, as can players who are hearing or mobility impaired.</li></ul>

## CROSS-CURRICULAR IDEAS

### HISTORY

The origin of goalball provides a rich vein of historical background for young people to explore. For example, the game was invented by an Austrian in 1946 as a form of recreation and rehabilitation for blinded war veterans. This can introduce parallels with those injured in recent conflicts and the role that Paralympic sport has played in their rehabilitation.

Goalball became the first sport specifically designed for disabled players to be introduced into the Paralympic programme (1980).

Torbball is a game similar to goalball and its development and essential differences can be another focus for study.

### SCIENCE

The study of sound is intrinsically linked to goalball. Players are continuously listening for the sound of the bell ball as it travels towards them, often at great speed, in order to make an effective block. For example:

- young people can challenge their listening skills whilst wearing eyeshades and experiment with different sounds that bell balls and improvised sound balls make on differing surfaces.
- Can they learn to determine the direction and angle of travel of the ball – both when defending and when sending – in order to improve performance next time?

## SAFETY

- Goalball players use elbow, knee and hip pads. However, beginners should stay on their feet, kneel if this is comfortable or use a thin mat.
- If mats are used for players to lie on, be careful of awkward deflections of the ball; lying near the front edge of the mat can prevent this.